

Kite festival will celebrate wind farm's completion

By Donald W. Meyers

The Salt Lake Tribune Published: September 4, 2008 12:12 am

The event also will include presentations on alternative energy sources

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SPANISH FORK - Looking for something to do this weekend? Go fly a kite.

No. Seriously.

The city is having a kite festival Friday and Saturday to celebrate the completion of Wasatch Wind's turbine farm at the mouth of Spanish Fork Canyon. The festival is at the Spanish Fork Reservoir and Gun Club, 2912 S. Spanish Oaks Drive.

"It is supposed to raise your spirits so you can soar like a kite," said Elaine Hansen, Spanish Fork's special-events director and festival organizer.

The festival will include a performance by Bruce Flora of Kiteman Productions. He has performed at Walt Disney World's EPCOT Center. Also scheduled is the Berkeley Kite Wranglers, a San Francisco Bay Area group that will be launching a 100-foot-long kite.

Hansen said there will also be local kite flyers, an air show featuring radio-controlled planes and a chance for kids to make and fly their own kites.

But it's not all fun and games. There will be presentations on alternative energy and ways to conserve energy, Hansen said.

Mayor Joe Thomas said the festival is being paid for in part by Wasatch Wind's first lease payment to the Utah County city for the 19-megawatt wind farm that he said is the first urban wind farm west of the Mississippi.

Christine Michael, Wasatch Wind's project developer, said the wind farm became operational July 30. Nine turbines, mounted on 471-foot towers, generate enough electricity to power 19,000 homes.

The turbines drew opposition at first, when they initially were going to be located near homes. Thomas said that with the turbines built at the canyon's mouth, complaints have ceased.

Hansen said the turbines will become a landmark for the city.

dmeyers@sltrib.com

The festival will run from noon to dusk Friday, and 9 a.m.

to dusk Saturday.

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